

Echo

Updated: End of the line for Dale Farm

9:00pm Thursday 30th June 2011

THE eviction of the Dale Farm traveller site is set to go ahead after the final piece of funding was put in place. About 20 protesters staged a demo outside the [Basildon](#) Centre ahead of a vote to finalise funding for the eviction of travellers from Dale Farm in Crays Hill.

The travellers and campaigners were joined by south Essex MEP Richard Howitt.

Mr Howitt said: "I am deeply anxious to have stood up against the forced eviction of Roma communities in France and Italy, and want to be certain for myself that the law is being respected on all sides here in my own constituency."

Traveller Mary Ann McCarthy said there would be a fight if the bailiffs go in and she and her 22 grandchildren would resist the eviction in their mobile home.

However council leader Tony Ball has said the eviction of travellers from Dale Farm needs to go ahead if families do not leave by choice.

The Tory said the breaches of planning at the illegal green belt encampment had gone on far too long.

Mr Ball said the vote on Thursday evening was not about revisiting the council's decision in March to release £8million for the authority's costs, but to vote over a further £1.2million to help with the police's up to £10million costs.

Councillor Allan Davies has called for the vote to be suspended so alternative sites can be considered.

The Labour member said: "The possibility of alternative sites on Homes and Communities Agency land has not been explored. We need to suspend this decision until these options have been completely exhausted."

But the protests fell on deaf ears as But 27 Tory councillors carried the vote opposed by 12 Labour and Lib Dems.

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